

To the Editor:

The present referendum on recruiting at Columbia, ill-conceived and rushed as it is, offers each student of Columbia College the opportunity to vote on an issue of fundamental academic reform of the University. It is important that each student be aware of the issues involved and does not vote without considering fundamental issues raised.

By inviting or allowing any group to recruit on campus, the University gives tacit, or in some cases, active support. Cloistering one group in Dodge Hall does not constitute active support but setting up recruiting facilities in dormitories or classroom building lobbies is somewhat more active. Columbia gives other forms of support to some recruiting efforts in the form of publicity, aid of a full time staff and access to students. No university has any business doing this sort of promotion. Since recruiting is not in support of the university's educational program, such procedures do not belong on campus. I came to Columbia to obtain an education, not to get a job.

Since almost 80% of my class will continue into graduate education, recruiting affects few of us. Certainly those who are interested in these opportunities are capable of making their own efforts toward job placement without the intermediary function of Columbia.

The corporations and military groups most interested in recruiting at Columbia should follow the example of the professional societies such as the American Historical Association which holds a well publicized yearly meeting in some large hotel that serves as the center for academic placement within the field. If the academic profession does not rely on the universities as the base for its recruiting, why should military and corporate organizations?

The whole issue of recruiting has been sharply exacerbated by the poisonous effect of the war on Vietnam on our society. One can well agree with President Kirk on the need for University neutrality on such political issues. It is extremely important that the University's tender fabric of academic freedom not be rended by a false neutrality as manifested by last year's CIA recruiting and the denial of the same privileges to the Friends of NLF. Concerning this non-educational policy, the university should declare its neutrality by excluding all recruiters. The students should make their voices clearly heard.

Jonathan Shills '68

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